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WASHINGTON REPORT
SEPTEMBER 1975

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ASC Press Luncheons give

INSIGHT INTO C.I.A. and KOREA

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During the last two years, the American Security Council has held frequent luncheons and briefings for the Washington press corps at which prominent experts have talked on timely items relating to national security policy. We have reported on several of these luncheons in past *WR*s. The last Council-hosted luncheons featured South Korea's Ambassador to the United States, His Excellency Pyong-choon Hahm, and Lt. Gen. Vernon A. Walters, USA (Ret.), Deputy Director of the Central Intelligence Agency.

The about 35 members of the working press regularly participating in these luncheons represent leading newspapers, news magazines, radio and television.

At each luncheon, the guest speaker speaks and then answers extensive questions.

Consistently these luncheon guests have generated AP and UPI wire service stories, as well as important columns and editorials. We are pleased that these stories have helped provide the public with important facts and views about key national security issues. And we are encouraged that the interest of the press in these luncheons has grown steadily.

Since what Ambassador Hahm and General Walters had to say was of particular importance, we are pleased to share with you their basic talks. Editor.

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C.I.A. and NATIONAL SURVIVAL

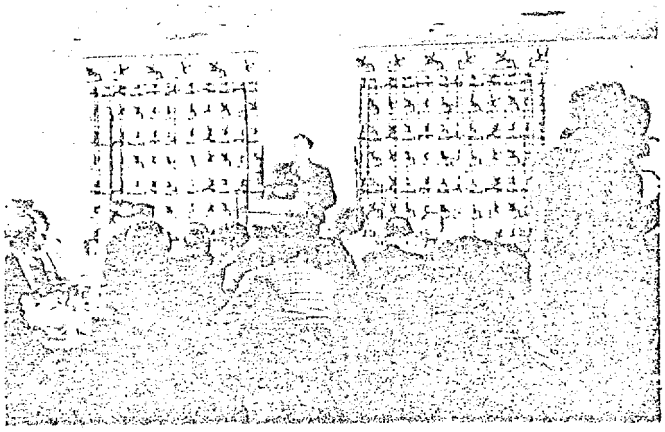
Remarks by
Lt. Gen. Vernon A. Walters
Deputy Director, CIA

I'd like to say, first of all, a few words about intelligence. Intelligence is information that is vital to the making of sound decisions by our Government, information concerning foreign countries and information concerning the policies of foreign countries, concerning the armament of foreign countries, concerning the economics of foreign countries that must be properly analyzed and must be properly disseminated.

For instance, a lot of intelligence, if you don't get it out in time, is simply history. It is not intelligence unless you get it to whoever needs it right away. Why do you need it? Why do we need it today?

Well, we need it today because, in my opinion, the United States is in a tougher power situation than it has been since Valley Forge. Not since Valley Forge has any foreign country had the ability to destroy or seriously cripple the United States. That capability exists today.

We all know that detente is, we hope, something that will work and will serve to lessen tensions between the countries. But at the same time as detente, we can't help seeing the Soviet Union deploying four new different types of ICBMs, with signs of a fifth on the horizon. They're



Lt. Gen. Vernon A. Walters, CIA Deputy Director, talks to attentive newsmen at an ASC press luncheon.

third generation missiles; they're not anything they've just cooked up. We see them building larger and more powerful submarines. We see them increasing the number of tanks and modernizing the tanks in the Soviet rifle divisions.

Question of Intent

We see, in other words, in all areas a tremendous military effort being made to modernize and improve the Soviet forces beyond what seems to me to be necessary for either deterrence or defense. And so the inevitable question which faces the United States Government is: What use will they make of this, of these capabilities? And that is a question for which the United States Government must look to the intelligence community, to the CIA and the other intelligence agencies, for answers.

Now, one of the problems we have today is that there is a great effort abroad to make you believe that intelligence is immoral, un-American, unworthy and everything else, and that everybody should know all the secrets that are running around, and that the Founding Fathers would have frowned on all of this dirty stuff that's going on.

Well, let me tell you a few things about the Founding Fathers. George Washington wrote a letter to his chief of intelligence in New Jersey, Col. Elias Dayton, and this is what he said: "The need for procurring good intelligence is so obvious that it need not be emphasized. All that remains for me is to caution you that secrecy is essential in these matters, and for lack of it they generally fail no matter how favorable the outcome."

So clearly, George Washington did not believe that publishing all the news concerning intelligence or the secrets of the United States was necessary.

And I come down to a much closer time, to President Truman. In 1956, he was asked about this subject, and his response may seem harsh to you – a lot of you from the media – but he said: "It matters not to the United States whether its secrets become known through publication in the media or through the activities of spies. The damage to the United States is the same in both cases." And he added: "I, for one, do not believe that the best interests of our country are served by going on the principle that everybody has the right to know everything."

And that extends across a long period of American history. So the idea that this is immoral or wrong is simply not an actual fact if you look at American history. However, I want to say something more about that.

Right now we're engaged in a number of inquiries to determine whether any great nation can operate its secret intelligence service, so to speak, in a goldfish bowl. Now, we may succeed because we are a very unusual people. But if we do, it'll be just like going to the moon. We'll have been the only ones who ever succeeded in doing it.

Now, I think these investigations can be healthy, they can be helpful to us in the future, providing they are conducted in a positive, constructive and responsible sense and are not operated as some sort of a political football, because the security of the United States is far too precious to be kicked around as a football.

Guidelines and Perception

We are quite prepared to accept any guidelines which the Congress may decide to put upon us. We could live with those guidelines as we've lived with the guidelines they gave us in the past. But I would hope that when they institute these guidelines, they institute some mechanism to change them so that as perceptions of what is acceptable and unacceptable change, that will be introduced in some way into the guidelines ....

Now, we are being called-up and investigated for the things we did, or are alleged to have done. What I fear is that in 1990 or 1985, Mr. Colby's distant successor will be summoned and he will be investigated for what he failed to do. "You mean you weren't doing this? You mean you didn't do that? You mean you failed to do this ...?"

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hearing the gunfire, came out of the hut, and they looked at the American and they said, 'Do you mean to say you had that submachine gun the whole time?'

"The American said, 'Sure.'

"And they said, 'Well, why the heck didn't you use it before now?'

"And the American looked at them, and very earnestly he said, 'But you don't understand. It wasn't until they kicked me in the rear end that I had any moral justification for it.' "

So this is a little bit of one of our problems, too.

Again, another foreigner said to me the other day, "Don't you have a law against indecent exposure in the United States, against taking off your clothes in public?"

I said, "We certainly do."

"Well," he said, "will you explain to me why you practice internationally what you prohibit domestically?"

Collection, Analysis and Dissent

In my opinion, America has brought two great things to intelligence: It has brought the application of American technology and scientific knowhow to the collection of intelligence. And it has brought analysis of that intelligence to a degreee that has not been known in previous intelligence services.

And I think one of the interesting things in our intelligence studies is that as they go forward, dissenting views are expressed, and the reasoning behind them is expressed, which I think is a somewhat new factor. I think we have brought this to intelligence and we have made intelligence a force not just for war, as in the past, but for peace.

I was present as General Eisenhower's interpreter at the '53 conference in Geneva. And he made the Open Skies Proposal whereby each country would overfly the others and see what they were doing. The Russians refused on the grounds that it would violate their sovereignty. I'll never forget, General Eisenhower wound up with a very eloquent speech, held his hands up to heaven and said, "I wish God would give me some means of convincing you of my sincerity." And there was a loud clap of thunder and every light in the building went out. And to this day, the Russian technicians are still trying to figure out how we did it.

We had great talk 15-20 years ago about a missile gap. We can't have that talk any more. Thanks to intelligence, we know what the situation is.

And you know one of the things that engenders hostility and eccentric and erratic action is fear of the unknown. And when you know what the situation is, you're a lot better off. I can't go into details, but I can tell you that we in the Central Intelligence Agency have several times brought together people from different countries that looked as if they were at the edge of conflict, and we have been in some part instrumental in resolving their dispute.

Or sometimes someone has said to us, "Oh, so-and-so is going to do such-and-such to us."

And we said, "No they aren't. We know they aren't because they haven't got the means to do it.

[illegible] me on faith. There's no way I can tell you who was involved or anything else because it would be extremely embarrassing to them and to us. But intelligence, believe me, is a force for peace as well as for war. It is a force to guard us against surprise. And it is also a force to dissipate misunderstandings or, as I say, fear of the unknown, which is one of the things that pushes people to do eccentric things.

The People of The CIA

I've been at the agency for three and a half years. People often ask me what I feel about it and all I can tell you is that I never cease to be startled at the competence, at the integrity, at the continuity, and most of all at the dedication of the people there. They're Americans just like everybody else in this room; they want to live in an American society according to the rules that the American people establish. But they must know what the American people are willing to accept as rules and what they want us to do.

Now, the Congress set up the Central Intelligence Agency in 1947 with the full knowledge that it was going to engage in espionage. And they left the charter deliberately vague: "And do such other things as the National Security Council may direct."

As I've told you, we can live with any kind of oversight. We have never had a leak out of our oversight committees. We tell them anything they want to know. And we can live with whatever form comes out of the present investigations; whatever form of oversight the Congress comes up with, we feel confident we can live with.

What I feel personally less confident about is whether we will get any clear guidelines as to what we can do and what we can't do. I think that's going to be an extremely difficult thing to get.

I would like to say one word about the people of the Central Intelligence Agency, and that is simply that, as I say, I've been struck by these people. Here they are under a torrent of accusation and mud and innuendo, and they are continuing to do a superb job in producing what I believe to be the finest intelligence put before any government in the world every morning.

People sometimes forget that people in intelligence have rights, too. They have the right to the same presumption of innocence as any other American citizen. The accusation comes, and the rebuttal never catches up. The news about Mr. Butterfield being a CIA infiltrator of the White House covered seven-column headlines. The news that he wasn't: one column.

A man by the name of Sturgis went on the television and said he was an employee of the CIA and had organized some plot against Castro. We called the director of that program and told him that a careful search of our files revealed that man had never at any time ever been a member of the CIA or worked for it in any form. He was introduced on the program as a former member of the CIA. There's just no way you can catch up with that kind of thing. I don't say this in any complaining aspect. I just say it on behalf of the thousands of people who are serving the United States in a very difficult way [illegible]

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This whole question of intelligence, as I said, is a very serious matter. The survival of the United States as a free and democratic society may well depend upon it. We have been spending enormous amounts of time rummaging through the garbage pails of history looking at the '50s and the '60s. The question of whether we're going to continue as a free and democratic nation is going to be decided in the late '70s and early '80s. And I just hope that sometime we begin to spend appropriate time on that period, which is going to determine how we and our children are going to live in the future.

I would like to say one word about our director, Mr. Colby. I rarely find myself in agreement with the Chinese Communists, but they have a song that says, "Sailing depends upon the helmsman," and we have a superb one.

Many people felt Mr. Colby should have been more aggressive or more penitential. I think Mr. Colby has established a credibility with the Congressional Committees that enables him to make sure that the good secrets are kept secret. I think he has established a reputation with them for frankness, for openness and for reliability. I think he has steered the only course that could hold the Agency together and gain the respect of the Committee so that we could have an objective and a dispassionate investigation.

And I must say that I consider him one of the most remarkable human beings I have ever known. I once said that the next time I went to Rome I'd go to the Vatican to see what I could do about obtaining the first beatification process for anybody still alive. How this man stands this pressure, I do not know, and he stands it without passing on any of the strain. Whatever there is, he absorbs himself -- he doesn't pass it on to me or any other of his subordinates. But I just think that we are very fortunate, indeed, to have such a pilot while we're passing through this squall.

As I say, one of the difficulties is that many people would want us to operate our intelligence service not just by standards acceptable to the American people, but with a degree of purity that we can be sure will not be reciprocated. And if you're fighting someone with brass knuckles, and you're required to fight according to the Marquis of Queensbury rules, you're going to have quite a difficult time, to put it mildly.

The Silent Battlefield

Finally, I would like to say that, every day when I go to work I see a reminder of something that is not our American choice, and that is that we must fight on the silent intelligence battlefield. As I go into the building, I see the stars carved in the wall of the Central Intelligence Agency which symbolize the people, the members of that Agency, who have fallen in the service of the United States -- unhonored, unknown by most, but nevertheless just as truly heroes as anybody who died anywhere else that you and I might continue to live free.

On the other side of the entrance is carved the motto of the Agency, which is a Biblical quote and says, "You shall know the truth and the truth will make you free." I can't help thinking that in our time, we perhaps ought to change that a little bit, irreverent as it might be, to "You must know the truth, for only the knowledge of the truth will keep you free."

We face a different kind of problem in the United States today. I would just like to read to you a couple of sentences from a Chinese writer who wrote 500 years before Christ. He wrote a book called *The Art of War*, and he described how you undo your enemies. And this is what he said:

"The most consummate art is to subdue your enemies without having to fight them on the battlefield. The direct method of war is necessary only on the battlefield, but it is only the indirect methods that lead to true victory and its consolidation."

And this is the advice he gives you of how you undo your enemies. If any of you find anything familiar about this, you're not wrong:

"Denigrate everything that is good in your opponent's country. Involve their leaders in criminal operations. Undermine them by every means and then expose them to the public scorn of their fellow citizens. Use the most execrable and vile individuals. Cause trouble by every means at hand within their government. Spread discord and quarrels amongst the citizens of the opposing country. Agitate the young against the old. Destroy by all means the weapons supply and discipline of your opponent. Cover with ridicule their old traditions and heritage. Be generous in your offers and rewards to purchase information or accomplices. Put secret agents everywhere. Never stint on money or promises, and thus you will reap a rich reward."

This is the new form of war with which we have to contend. It is not the old thing of divisions marching across the field. It is this type of thing which is the silent battlefield of which I speak.

We will do our best. We will conform to whatever standards are imposed upon us by the American people. Throughout the past, the United States intelligence community has tried to do what they could to keep the United States a free and independent country. This is sometimes difficult, because we Americans have a tendency to disband our intelligence after wars or between wars.

In August, 1941, I was sent to the Military Intelligence Training Center at Camp Ritchie, and the commandant of that camp was a British Colonel. In 1932, Mr. Stimson, when he was Secretary of State, was handed an intercepted message and rejected it in horror, saying, "Gentlemen don't read other gentlemen's mail." Seven years later, as Secretary of War, he couldn't get his hands on enough other gentlemen's mail.

As I mentioned, perceptions change. We hope that as a result of these things, we will get guidelines, but guidelines that will contain the means of telling us when these perceptions change, and that we will not be judged on what we did in 1955 on the basis of 1975 standards or judged in 1990 on the basis of 1990 standards against what was done in 1976.

People have asked me whether I thought the Agency will survive this. I have no doubt. If the United States is to remain a free and independent country, it must have good intelligence. There is no alternative for us as a people.

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